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AUTHOR Berney, Tomi D.
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ABSTRACT

The Spanish Native Language Arts Development Turnkey Training Program attempted to create a network of secondary school administrators and teachers of Spanish acquainted with current research and methodology and able to provide staff development in native language arts for teachers of native Spanish speakers of limited English proficiency. Nine turnkey trainers and about 70 teachers participated. One language arts staff developer worked with the turnkey trainers on Saturdays from February through June. The turnkey trainers then worked with the teachers at six sites on Tuesday afternoons. The program met four of its objectives, and the fifth could not be assessed due to lack of data. Response to the program was positive among both trainers and teachers. Recommendations for program improvement include beginning the program earlier in the school year, and extension of the program to serve English-as-a-Second-Language and Chinese native language arts teachers. (MSE)

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OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

SPANISH NATIVE LANGUAGE ARTS STAFF DEVELOPMENT TURNKEY TRAINING PROGRAM SPRING 1989

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EVALUATION SECTION
John E. Schoener, Chief Administrator
January 1990

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

SPANISH NATIVE LANGUAGE ARTS STAFF DEVELOPMENT TURNKEY TRAINING PROGRAM SPRING 1989

Prepared by
The Multicultural/Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit
Tomi Deutsch Berney, Evaluation Manager

New York City Board of Education
Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment
Robert Tobias, Director

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SPANISH NATIVE LANGUAGE ARTS STAFF DEVELOPMENT
TURNKEY TRAINING PROGRAM
SPRING 1989

SUMMARY

- The Spanish Native Language Arts Staff Development Turnkey Training Program was fully implemented. During the spring of 1989, high school administrators and teachers received instruction in teaching Native Language Arts to Limited English Proficient students whose native language was Spanish.

- The project met four of its five objectives. It was impossible to assess the accomplishment of one objective because of a lack of relevant data.

The Spanish Native Language Arts Staff Development Turnkey Training Program attempted to create a network of Spanish Native Language Arts (N.L.A.) staff developers and to familiarize all participants with the latest research and techniques in language arts instruction. Nineteen turnkey trainers and approximately 70 teachers participated. One language arts staff developer worked with the turnkey trainers at a single site on Saturday mornings from February through June. These turnkey trainers then worked with groups of teachers at six sites on the following Tuesday afternoons.

In evaluating the program, OREA interviewed participants, observed workshops, and distributed and analyzed participant evaluation surveys. The program created a network of Spanish N.L.A. staff developers, and acquainted these developers and their trainees with the latest research and methodologies. The program also encouraged teachers to implement the new ideas in the classroom and correlated the content of the program with the Spanish N.L.A. Curriculum Guide. Thus, the program met four of its objectives. It was impossible to ascertain achievement of the fifth objective -- whether issues and concerns regarding the teaching of secondary Spanish N.L.A. had been identified as a result of the project, but it is likely that this objective was also met.

Response to the program was positive. Both trainers and teachers felt they had learned a great deal, that what they had learned was relevant and applicable, and that the quality of the workshops was very high. A frequently voiced criticism was that the program should have started earlier in the school year. Many also felt that the program should be extended to offer similar support to teachers of E.S.L. and Chinese N.L.A.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- If possible, begin program earlier in school year.

- If funds permit, expand program to serve E.S.L. and Chinese N.L.A. teachers.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of the 1989 state-funded Spanish Native Language Arts (N.L.A.) Staff Development Turnkey Training Program. The Office of High School Bilingual/English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) Programs of the New York City Board of Education operated the program, which provided staff development to 19 turnkey trainers and over 70 teachers on the teaching of writing.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

There are a large number of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in the New York City public high schools enrolled in N.L.A. courses. Frequently, their instructors teach language arts in English or, if they do use the native language, they have never been formally trained in techniques of N.L.A. There is a serious shortage of N.L.A. teachers specifically trained to teach language arts in Spanish while following the New York City curriculum.

The Turnkey Training project planned to use one language arts trainer to educate a core group in the techniques of teaching N.L.A. This core group would then become turnkey trainers, teaching groups of N.L.A. teachers to implement, in Spanish, the techniques they had learned. It was also anticipated that both groups would become familiar with the Spanish N.L.A. Curriculum Guide.

SETTING

The turnkey trainers met at Park West High School in Manhattan for their training sessions. These trainers then taught groups at six high schools: Louis Brandeis and Washington Irving in Manhattan, Theodore Roosevelt and Walton in the Bronx, Eastern District in Brooklyn, and International High School in Queens.

PARTICIPANTS

The turnkey trainers included assistant principals of foreign languages, foreign language coordinators, classroom teachers, and a staff development specialist. They represented approximately 11 different New York City high schools. The teachers were from the six high schools at which the staff development took place as well as from neighboring high schools.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

The program consisted of a series of workshops in "Reader Response Theory," "Writing to Learn about Literature," and "Teaching Writing as a Process." Dr. Phyllis Edelson of Pace University led the sessions with the turnkey trainers. These sessions were four hours long and were held on Saturdays, February through June. The trainers met with teacher groups on the following Tuesdays.

REPORT FORMAT

This report is organized as follows: Chapter II describes the evaluation methodology; Chapter III presents the findings;

and Chapter IV offers conclusions and recommendations based upon the results of the evaluation.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed program implementation and outcomes. Evaluation questions included the following:

Process/Implementation

- Did the program assist in the development of a network of Spanish N.L.A. staff developers?
- Did the program expose participants to research in secondary language arts and teaching methodology?
- Did program participants implement what they had learned in their classrooms?
- Were the program activities correlated with the Spanish N.L.A. Curriculum Guide?

Outcome

- Did participants indicate that they had learned anything from the Turnkey Training program?
- How did participants rate the overall quality of the workshops?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

An OREA staff member observed sessions for turnkey trainers and for teachers. She interviewed the project coordinator, the language arts trainer, the turnkey trainers, and a sample of teachers.

In addition to the interviews and observations, OREA designed, distributed, and analyzed evaluation surveys of both turnkey trainers and teacher participants. These surveys contained Likert-type scales on which respondents rated many

aspects of the program, including the amount they had learned, the relevance of what they had learned to their professional responsibilities, the sufficiency of time for questions and discussion, the helpfulness of the materials, the extent of applicability of the information provided, and the overall quality of the workshops. Scales had six points, with one being the lowest score and six being the highest. Open-ended questions allowed the participants to list what they particularly liked about the workshops and what suggestions they had for future staff development sessions.

All evaluation activities took place near the end of the program so that participants had attended most of the workshops when they were questioned about their value. In analyzing data, OREA computed means on the close-ended survey questions.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Spanish N.L.A. Turnkey Training Program provided staff development in teaching Spanish Native Language Arts to high school administrators and teachers. Program objectives were:

- To develop a network of Spanish N.L.A. staff developers.

The program successfully developed a network of Spanish N.L.A. staff developers by training a core group and then having that group teach others. Turnkey trainers reported that even those who were not specifically involved in the program were benefiting from it - turnkey trainers were being asked to give demonstration lessons in their schools and to help other N.L.A. teachers on an individual basis. Therefore, the program met its first objective.

- To acquaint turnkey trainers and teacher trainees with the latest research in secondary language arts and teaching methodology, with a strong emphasis on writing and its place in the literature program.

Dr. Phyllis Edelson presented the latest research in secondary language arts and teaching methodology in an interesting hands-on format. In the turnkey sessions and in the teacher-trainee sessions the participants became deeply involved and actually engaged in the activities they would be presenting to their students. The "Reader Response Theory" taught teachers how to develop student responsiveness to literature. "Writing to Learn about Literature" discussed the role of writing in teaching literature. "Teaching Writing as a Process" included the

concepts of a voice, an audience, and the writer's task. The workshop topics were based upon the latest research in teaching writing in a literature program. The project met its second objective.

- To implement the above research in the classroom.

While there was no actual classroom observation, the teachers who were interviewed by the OREA staff member reported on ways in which they had used their newly acquired skills in their classrooms. One teacher said he had never been comfortable teaching literature, but by using the techniques he had learned, he saw a tremendous improvement in his ability as a teacher and an improvement in his students as well. One new teacher, who was still on probation, was asked by his principal to tape a lesson he gave his students and to present it in a workshop to all N.L.A. teachers in the fall. It was clear that the project met the above objective.

- To connect the research findings to the Spanish N.L.A. Curriculum Guide.

Dr. Edelson indicated that the lessons she presented were closely tied to the Spanish N.L.A. Curriculum Guide. This was substantiated by Mr. Menendez, the project coordinator. The Spanish N.L.A. Turnkey Training project met its curriculum guide objective.

- To identify issues and concerns regarding the teaching of secondary Spanish N.L.A. for future staff development programs.

While it is unclear whether the project specifically met this objective, it did provide a list of topics to be covered in future workshops. These topics included classroom management of writing instruction, responding to student writing, writing and critical thinking, and teaching inquiry as process.

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

Project participants had high praise for the training, the trainer, and the program coordinator. They emphasized that the training increased their knowledge and that it was both relevant and applicable. One called it, "the best workshop in my 28 years as an educator." Several emphasized that the training provided a better understanding of the relationship between "the reading experience and the writing process." A trainee praised the program for being "a student-centered concept which validates student input."

Survey results indicated that the turnkey trainers felt they had learned a great deal. When asked how much knowledge of the topic they had brought to the workshops, the average score was only 2.6 (s.d. = 1.2). When asked how much knowledge they had after the training, the average response was 5.0 (s.d. = 0.9). The increase in knowledge was statistically significant at the .05 level. Their average rating of the overall quality of the workshop was 4.9 (s.d. = 0.5). Seventy-two participating teachers responded to the survey and indicated a similar increase in knowledge.

Many turnkey trainers felt that the course should have been begun earlier in the school year. They felt that February was late and that September would have been preferable. They would have also liked more time to prepare before teaching what they had learned to the participating teachers. Some trainers and teachers requested that more time be spent on techniques for developing students' critical thinking skills. Many also suggested that the program be extended to meet the needs of E.S.L. and Chinese N.L.A. teachers. It was clear that all involved participants, at whatever level, felt that the program was highly successful and that there was a need for its continuation and expansion.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on participants' enthusiastic verbal and written responses and on the observations of the workshops, OREA judged the Spanish N.L.A. Staff Development Turnkey Training Program to have been highly successful. It provided training in an area where little staff development had occurred in the past; it used current research on teaching language arts for the specific teaching of Spanish Native Language Arts; it motivated all who used the new techniques and allowed them to see immediate positive results with their students.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- If possible, begin program earlier in school year.
- If funds permit, expand program to serve E.S.L. and Chinese N.L.A. teachers.